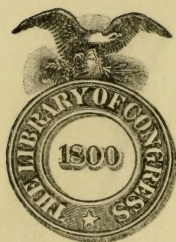


OUT OF THE  
GATHERING  
BASKET





Class SB 455

Book . M 38

Copyright N<sup>o</sup>                     

**COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT**

















# OUT OF THE GATHERING BASKET









# OUT OF THE GATHERING BASKET

A Series of Sketches on  
Gardens and Books  
by  
GRACE GOODMAN MAURAN



Published by  
RALPH FLETCHER SEYMOUR  
Chicago

---

M C M X X I

SB 455  
M 38

Copyright 1921  
by  
Ralph Fletcher Seymour



JUL 19 '21

©CL A622397

*To C. S. M.*

*Who Made My Garden Possible.*







## CONTENTS.

	Page
The Gathering Basket	3
The Garden in Books	11
Flowery Traits	23
Bach Among the Madonnas	33
Rosy Reflections	37
The Picked Flower	43
The Child in the Garden	49
A Ghostly Garden Party	55
The Plush Pansy	63
The Garden as a Social Centre	69
Cosmos, Cats, and Coyotes	75
A Shredded Day	81
Architectural Blossoms	87
Souls, Seeds and Forsythias	93




# OUT OF THE GATHERING BASKET





## THE GATHERING BASKET

URING a memorable conversation between Bazarov, the hero of Turgenev's *Fathers and Children*, and his fascinating friend, Madame Odinstov, the subject of happiness is introduced, and Madame Odinstov questions: "Tell me why it is that even when we are enjoying music, for instance, or a fine evening, or a conversation with sympathetic people, it all seems an intimation of some measureless happiness existing apart somewhere rather than actual happiness such as, I mean, we are ourselves in possession of?"

This is profoundly and sadly true, but perhaps the fault is our own, perhaps we do not know how to "burst joy's grape against our palates fine," or perhaps our palates are not fine enough. Yet if ever this realization of happiness was ours, if ever there came a moment when we might pause in our enjoyment and say:

“this is true happiness,” we would wish to make of the thing that gave us such delight a life-long pursuit. But of course it would be one thing for you and another for me; happiness, as we know, being an individual as well as a relative matter; it is the old case of one man’s meat being another man’s poison, and even the music, the fine evening and the sympathetic conversation which touched so nearly Madame Odinstov’s ideal of happiness might mean boredom to others.

In the concluding essay in Pater’s volume on *The Renaissance* the author refers to what he considers the most beautiful passage in the writings of Rousseau, the passage in which is described the awakening in the great Frenchman of the literary sense. “An undefinable taint of death had always clung about Rosseau,” says Pater, “and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biased by anything in his previous life when he

decided that it must be by intellectual excitement—" And Pater goes on to say that we are all condemned, all under the sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve. "We have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest at least among the children of this world in art and song." We should get as many pulsations as possible into our given time, says the essayist, and we may get them through great passions, or by means of the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come to us.

A form of "enthusiastic activity" which seems to me worthy to fill at least a part of the space of the indefinite reprieve, and which comes the nearest to affording the tangible happiness for which Turgenev's heroine sighed, is gardening. Though we might wish to extend that reprieve indefinitely, and desire, as Montaigne confessed he desired, to banish the king of terrors altogether, still if he must

come, let us say, with Montaigne, that he may come and find us planting our cabbages. For to work in mother earth, to help plants to grow, and to assist flowers in reaching the full perfection of their beauty are tasks which to the garden-lover bring as rich and deep a happiness as can fall to the lot of mortal man or woman. There is true adventure for the spirit in the planting of a seed, there is something akin to maternal tenderness in the feeling with which one watches the young plant grow, and there is a joy not unlike the creative pleasure of the artist in seeing the result of one's labor and painstaking.

Of course gardeners are like geniuses, they are born, not made, and one might say to the would-be gardener: "If your love of the soil is not deep enough, and your desire to cultivate growing things is not great enough to make you suffer and endure for the sweet face of a flower, why there is no use in your following this profession, you will not find your happiness in a garden." As Kipling has said:



“—gardens are not made  
By singing:—‘Oh, how beautiful,’ and sit-  
ing in the shade  
While better men than we go out and  
start their working lives  
At grubbing weeds from gravel-paths with  
broken dinner knives.  
There’s not a pair of legs so thin, there’s  
not a head so thick,  
There’s not a hand so weak and white,  
nor yet a heart so sick,  
But it can find some needful job that’s  
crying to be done  
For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth  
every one.”

No, the garden does not glorify those persons who work in it; from a sense of duty rather than love, or the Peter Bells of the world who fail to see the poetry in primroses. It is not unusual to hear some luke-warm cultivator of plants say: “I never have any luck with flowers, they simply will not grow for me.” This may be quite true, though it is not a question of luck but one of genuine, and some-

times secret sympathy between plant and gardener.

In his essay on Nature, Emerson says, "Flowers belong so strictly to youth that we adult men soon come to feel that their beautiful generations concern not us, and we are old bachelors with our ridiculous tenderness." Ridiculous tenderness, indeed! Was Wordsworth's tenderness for the meanest flower that blows, and Tennyson's for the flower in the crannied wall, and Burns' for the daisy that fell under his plough, ridiculous? And though Huxley's interest in the gentian was partly scientific was there not a sentimental quality in his feeling for this particular flower? And Emerson refuted his own assertion, for it is said that during the last years of his life he loved to look upon the little blossom called self-heal which crept into the grass before his study window, and whose very name suggests the idea that it was the floral expression of one of the theories of the great essayist.

Yet it is my conviction as a gardener that in order to enjoy the occupation of

gardening to its fullest extent one must be a book-lover as well as flower-lover, for literature and flowers seem to be so intertwined as to appear almost to grow on the same stem. We like, while reading in our libraries, to glance from the printed page to the bowl of flowers on the table, and the pleasure is equally great if, while weeding in our garden, we may look up to see, lying on a nearby table, or chair, or reposing in the gathering basket by the side of the scissors, or clipped blossoms a beloved book-friend, communion with which is to be the crown and the reward of the morning's work.

And so this being my conviction it is seldom that I enter the garden unaccompanied by a book, and it affords genuine satisfaction to see before me *The Merchant of Venice*, or *The Idiot*, or *The Princess Cassimassima*, or *Richard Feverel*, or *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, and to know that they are respectfully waiting there among the flowers the moment when I can give them attention and interest. And just as I like to have in

the garden one particular bed devoted to the old-fashioned flowers, the sweet-williams, and lantanas, and bouncing bets and four o'clock's and butter-cups, so do I frequently choose as garden companions such well-tried flowers of fiction as Evelina, Cecilia, Emma, Shirley, Henry Esmond, and David Copperfield. Sometimes I commune with these well-loved friends, but frequently it is enough merely to know that they are there, ready to cast their spell and to recall, if desired, the memorable days of our first meeting.

And when I return to the house, with gathering basket filled to the brim with the flowers destined for indoor decoration, there seems to be within my brain a kind of mental receptacle into which have been gathered small nosegays of thought that promise to give color and beauty to life. The essays within this little volume are made up of such nosegays, and if they fail to attract other visions than my own, at least I have had the pleasure of gathering them.

## THE GARDEN IN BOOKS

**B**OOKS, as I have said, should form part of the accessories of a garden, but not necessarily books on country life, for as it has been said that the country is for the benefit of those born in town, so it might be stated with equal truth that books on out-of-door life are most enjoyed by readers sitting in city library chairs.

The English critic, Leslie Stephens, belongs to this class, and in his delightful essay on Country Books, he freely admits that though a cockney in grain, he loves to lean upon the farmyard gate of literature, "to hear Mrs. Poyser give a bit of her mind to the squire; to be lulled into a placid doze by the humming of Dorlecote Mill, to sit down in Dandie Dinmont's parlour and bestow crumbs from his groaning table upon three generations of Peppers and Mustards." But when he lifts his eyes from these imagi-



nary scenes, Mr. Stephens confesses that he is not adverse to gazing across the street where he can "dimly descry his neighbor behind his looking glass, adjusting the parting of his back hair, and achieving triumphs with his white tie calculated to excite the envy of a Brummel. And then," says Stephens, "in order to annihilate this neighbor and his evening parties, it is pleasant to take down one of the magicians of the shelf, and to wander off through quiet country lanes into some sleepy hollow of the past." There are many who share this critic's views, who enjoy breathing the country air through books, but who in reality choose always to be where they may catch glimpses of their neighbors' back hair and ties.

But if I wanted to enjoy this book-country in its purest essence, its keenest reality, it would be neither George Eliot or Scott that I would choose as a guide, but rather that greatest of all interpreters of rural scenes, Thomas Hardy. I would stand on Norcombe Hill with



Gabriel Oak, and watch this shepherd tend his sheep and young ewes; I would wander over that "great inviolate plane," Egdon Heath, with its unsympathetic habitant, Eustacia Vye, and I would stand beside Giles Winterbourne while he planted the young firs. "He had a marvelous power of making trees grow," had Giles Winterbourne. "Although he would seem to shovel the earth in quite carelessly, there was a sort of sympathy between himself and the fir, oak or beech that he was operating on, so that the roots took hold of the soil in a few days."

Our cockney critic believes that poets are not to be trusted as potent weavers of this magic, this power to make one enjoy country air while seated in a town library, for the poets are too much given to sermonizing. Shelley's Skylark, and Keat's Nightingale are equally determined, he avows, that we shall indulge in meditations upon life and death, and the mysterious meaning of the universe, while Matthew Arnold's Gipsy Scholar,

instead of lulling the reader into delicious dreams and longings to become a gipsy, cause him to worry over this strange disease of modern life, and about "our brains o'ertaxed and palsied hearts."

But there are two books concerning whose potency in this matter of magic-weaving Mr. Stephens has no doubts, and in which a happy combination of circumstances has provided us with true country idylls fresh from the soil. One of these is Izaak Walton's *Complete Angler*, a volume which if read at all by anglers is read I fancy only by the literary ones, and the other is Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selbourne*, a classic of the garden of which the same might be said, that if read by gardeners is read only by the bookish ones. Of the quaint simplicity and charm of this latter volume, Stephens has much to say, as has also James Russel Lowell who thus delightfully writes of it: "Open the volume where you will, it takes you out of doors. In our broiling July weather one can walk out with this genially garrulous

Fellow of Oriel, and find refreshment instead of fatigue. It is a book," he goes on to say, "that has also the delightfulness of absolute leisure. Mr. White seems never to have had any harder work to do than to study the habits of his feathered townfolk, or to watch the ripening of the peaches on his wall. The natural term of a hog's life had more interest for him than that of an empire, and he writes gravely of making the acquaintance in 1770, of an old family tortoise with whom he evidently fell in love at first sight."

"There are moods," continues Lowell, "in which this kind of history is infinitely refreshing. These creatures whom we affect to look down upon as the drudges of instinct are members of a commonwealth whose constitutions rest on immovable bases. Never any need of reconstruction there! They never dream of settling it by vote that eight hours are equal to ten, or that one creature is as clever as another and no more. They do not use their poor wits in regulating God's clocks, nor think they cannot go

astray as long as they carry their guide-board about with them—”

The essay of Lowell's from which these quotations are made is said by Stephens to be one of the most charming essays on gardens ever written, and one has but to dip into it to realize the truth of this statement, and yet both White and Lowell seem to have confined their garden acquaintance almost wholly to birds and insects and to have ignored those equally beautiful and responsive habitants of a garden, the flowers. Lowell's essay bears the title *My Garden Acquaintance*, but what kind of a garden could it have been that yielded friendship only with birds and none with growing plants. And in White's *History*, which frequently takes the form of letters, the flowers are but minor characters and not to be put on the same plane with the British hirundines, the sand-martins, and swifts. "Dear sir," he characteristically writes to the Honourable Daines Barrington, "Your observation that the cuckoo does not deposit its eggs indiscriminately in

the nest of the first bird that comes in its way, but probably looks out a nurse in some degree congenerous with whom to intrust its young is perfectly new to me; and struck me so forcibly, that I naturally fell into a train of thought that led me to consider whether the fact was so, and what reason there was for it."

There are indeed moods, as Lowell has said, in which this kind of history is infinitely refreshing, and the reader is quite in sympathy with the author's conviction, expressed in the opening lines of his "advertisement," that "if stationary men would pay some attention to the districts in which they reside, and would publish their thoughts respecting the objects that surround them, from such material might be drawn the most complete county-histories which are still wanting—"

So in spite of what Leslie Stephens has said regarding the sermonizing habits of poets, when writing about nature, it is to the poets we must turn for a true interpretation of the soul of a flower.



To Emily Dickenson's description of the  
may-flower:

“Pink, small, and punctual,  
Aromatic, low,  
Covert in April  
Candid in May,

Dear to the moss,  
Known by the knoll  
Next to the robin  
In every human soul.”

And to her interpretation of the character of an anonymous blossom in the following lines:

“So bashful when I spied her,  
So pretty, so ashamed!  
So hidden in her leaflets,  
Lest anybody find;

So breathless till I passed her,  
So helpless when I turned  
And bore her, struggling, blushing  
Her simple haunts beyond!

For whom I robbed the dingle,  
For whom betrayed the dell,  
Many will doubtless ask me,  
But I shall never tell!"

And every gardener loves Miss Dickenson's tribute to that constant friend of all out-of-door workers, the grass.

"The grass so little has to do,  
A sphere of simple green,  
With only butterflies to brood,  
And bees to entertain,

And stir all day to pretty tunes  
The breezes fetch along  
And hold the sunshine in its lap  
And bow to everything;

And thread the dew all night, like pearls,  
And make itself so fine—  
A duchess were too common for such a  
noticing

And even when it dies, to pass  
In odors so divine  
As lowly spices gone to sleep,  
Or amulets of pine.



And then to dwell in sovereign barns,  
And dream the days away,  
The grass so little has to do,  
I wish I were the hay!"

It is this way of treating the flower, and all growing things, as individuals, or as playing their parts in the lives of individuals that delights the gardener who rejoices to know that the influence of her floral friends is recognized and that they are permitted to take their rightful places in the human drama.

What would poor mad Ophelia be without her rosemary that's for remembrance, and her pansies which are for thought? And who could think of the lovely Perdita without her garden, her marigolds "that go to bed with the sun and her pale primroses that die unmarried." And to speak of primroses is to recall another of Shakespeare's immortal women, Imogen, whose face was like that flower, whose veins recalled the azur'd harebell, and whose breath out-sweetened the eglantine leaf.

One might write a literary history of the violet, hiding beside the mossy stone, springing from the pure and unpolluted flesh of the dead Ophelia, and comforting the dying Keats who declared that he could almost feel it growing over his grave. Burns atoned to the "wee, modest crimson-tipped" daisy that fell a victim to his plough by writing an unforgettable poem about it, and though he sermonized, as Stephens says is the way with poets, and compared his own fate to that of the flower, we are grateful for the sermon. William Vaughn Moody immortalized a youthful love in his *Heart's Wild-Flower*:

"But where she strays, through blight or  
    blooth, one fadeless flower she wears,  
A little gift God gave my youth,—whose  
    petals dim were fears,  
Awes, adorations, songs of ruth, hesi-  
    tancies, and tears."

And who that has loved and wept over Tennyson's *Maud* can forget the way in which the flowers sympathized with the


lover as he waited in the garden for the coming of his adored one:

“The red rose cried, ‘she is near, she is near.’

And the white rose weeps, ‘she is late;’  
The larkspur listens, ‘I hear, I hear;’  
And the lily whispers, ‘I wait.’ ”

It is in lines like these that flowers come into their own, and every gardener knows that they can thus sympathize with moods and feelings. But she knows too, that one must live with them long and love them truly before they will yield this lovely blossom of understanding.

## FLOWERY TRAITS

N THE introduction to her illuminating book on Japanese Flower Arrangement, Mary Averill says that she believes that flowers are a greater factor in the life of the Japanese than in that of any other nation. She even goes so far as to state that, having followed this art of arranging flowers from their youth up, the Japanese have gained thereby ideas of proportion, powers of concentration, and some of their finest traits of character.

High praise this for so seemingly simple a thing as a flower, but if it be true, if the love of flowers and the study of their formation and characteristics do leave their impress upon character, then the American people have too much neglected a valuable aid to education and culture. For although we recognize gardens and flowers as ornamental adjuncts to life we are inclined to look upon the

garden enthusiast as upon the ardent golfer, as one engaged in a harmless and healthful pastime.

And there is no doubt but what living among and working with flowers does affect character; florists seem to have a certain gentleness and kindliness not betrayed by other tradesmen, and one can more readily imagine a butcher committing murder than a gardener.

And then too, flowers have strong characters of their own, and just as with people, there are some to whom you surrender your heart at the first meeting, and others with whom you could never wish to be on terms of intimacy. Who, for instance, could be intimate with a canna or a begonia, and what flower-lover could ever grow sentimental over a salvia, or a cock's-comb?

And there are flowers possessed of certain contrary ways which beget in those who live with them a kind of horticultural irritation. For example, there are what might be called floppy flowers, such as the larkspur or gladiolus,



flowers which seem to possess no backbone and require constant bolstering on the part of the gardener. There are people like that, people who seem to have no self-reliance, who demand frequent proppings, and who if left to themselves would be in a drooping condition most of the time. After one has given frequent assistance to such flowers, and finds them evading the prop, one is inclined to say to the leaning larkspur, or reclining gladiolus: "Well, fall where you will, I am done with you," just as one says to their human counterparts: "If you can't take care of yourselves you ought to fall."

And then there are flowers which fail to fulfill their promise, which go, as we say, all to leaf, and after raising hopes of gorgeous blossomings, put forth a few meagre blossoms and are done. We have all known people like this, people who make a great show of their leaves of promise, who dazzle us with prospects of great achievements, and in the end amount to no more than that despised habitant of a garden, a hill of beans.

And some flowers go too early to seed, they fill the gardener's soul with beauty one morning, and a few days after have retired into a premature state of seediness. Of course the day-lily confesses its brevity by its name, but in the case of this flower when one blossom fades there is another to take its place so that you may be on with the new love as soon as you are off with the old. There are people who wither too early in their lives, who are always confiding to you that they have outlived this pleasure or that, and who unlike the day-lily fail to replace the old blossom of pleasure by a finer new one.

It was said of Balzac that he accepted the theory that a man's name influences his character, and that even the initial of a name held within it great power for good or evil, a man afflicted with the tortuous letter Z being foredoomed to a life of torment. If this were true it might be well to name children after flowers, avoiding of course the ill-named zinnia, though experience has proven how very unlily like girls named Lily



often are, how human Roses frequently but little resemble in character the Queen of flowers, and how the Violets are sometimes known to be characterized by the most worldly ideals and self-seeking ways. The mother of one of Meredith's heroines who was possessed of the poetic passion for flowers gave her heart to dahlias, "and Dahlia was the name uttered at the christening of her eldest daughter."

But this custom of naming children after flowers has one drawback: the name while suiting the child seems unsuited to the elderly woman. Violet, Daisy, and Dahlia are names eminently appropriate for the day of christening, but grandmother Violet, great aunt Daisy, and old-maid Dahlia sound to some ears absurd. Yet why should this be so? The violet goes to seed, but retains within that seed the qualities of unobtrusiveness and modesty for which it is admired; the daisy may preserve its freshness and innocence when externally it is dried and faded and the dahlia's

glorious color is not altogether at the mercy of time. As Professor Santayana has more gracefully expressed it: "Even under the inevitable crust of age, the soul remains young, and wherever it is able to break through sprouts into something green and tender." And he might have added that these elderly human sprouts sometimes reveal a beauty unknown to those of the younger plant, the kind of beauty of which Pater speaks in describing the charm of La Giconda: "A beauty wrought out from within, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions."

As a gardener I am sometimes drawn into idle and fanciful meditations concerning the origin of certain names of flowers, and I should like to know something of those daring individuals who presumed to bestow these names. It would delight me, for instance, to know what lover of good eating ventured to perpetuate his fondness for butter and eggs by calling a flower by such a materialistic name, and what lonely bachelor

consoled himself for the absence of buttons, and a sewer-on of buttons, by naming a flower a bachelor's button.

Did certain English flowers so resemble the bells of Canterbury cathedral as to be deemed worthy of the name of canterbury bell? Was there a time when foxes wore gloves and larks had spurs that two of our most popular flowers should be called foxgloves and larkspurs? Of course we understand how the bloodroot, the solomon's seal, and the milkweed got their names, and it is obvious that the daisy is the day's eye. And then there are flowers like the hyacinth which have a mythical origin and which are associated with some romantic legend, but in the cases of most flowers there is no accounting for the name, and no way of tracing its history.

Some one, I think it was Miss Wilkinson, once wrote a charming poem about that quaint and old-fashioned habitant of both wild and cultivated places, the bouncing bet, and the writer intimated that this flower having been originally

wild, had one day bounced into a garden and taken to cultivated ways. It must have been a part of Betty's system of culture to forego bouncing habits for in the garden she is all too much inclined to lie prostrate instead of living up to her reputation for action, such no doubt being one of the evil consequences of cultivation.

That delicate little garden flower called love-in-a-mist was evidently named by some man who had been disappointed in love, for it bears another name which is in itself a sad revelation of this lover's disillusionment. It is sometimes called devil-in-a-bush, and it is all too evident that this unhappy man after groping about in the tantalizing mists of love, discovered at last that love was not there at all, but only some horrid evil creature that was lying in wait for his soul.

Poets seem to love the mere names of flowers and often by a simple enumeration of these names conjure up a picture and produce a spell. In the second verse of William Vaughan Moody's beautiful

poem, Gloucester Moors we have such an instance:

“Jill—o’er the ground is purple blue,  
Blue is the quaker-maid,  
The wild geranium holds its dew  
Long in the boulder’s shade.

Wax-red hangs the cup  
From the huckleberry boughs  
In barberry bells the gray moths sup,  
Or where the choke-cherry lifts high up  
Sweet bowls for their carouse.”


One can hardly read this poem without experiencing a desire to depart at once for Gloucester Moors, in order to make the acquaintance, or to renew an acquaintance with two such charmingly named flowers as jill-o’er-the-ground, and the quaker-maid.

These idle fancies, thrown hap-hazard into the mental gathering basket prove one thing at least, that whether we accept or not the belief of the Japanese, that the study of flowers influences character it is certain that living and

working among them does indeed color one's thoughts and create certain flowery fancies.



## BACH AMONG THE MADONNAS

USIC came to me this morning in the garden, and it was high time that it did so, for had I not all my life gone to music. Had I not arrayed myself in my best garments, offered my money at a box-office, sat among those who knew so much more about music than I did, or so much less, and in fact done everything possible to desecrate this greatest of the arts in order to "enjoy" it. And now it was time that music came to me, if for nothing but to save myself, and itself, from the desecration.

I think it was a Bach fugue that chose to thus honor me and my garden, though I don't know exactly what a fugue is, and I am not altogether sure that it was Bach. But the music harmonized so well with the madonna lilies whose roots I was cultivating that I like to think it was Bach. And it was pleasant



to have this music disembodied, unassociated with a personality who asks a price for his art. To be sure I am dimly aware that I owe these out-of-door harmonies to a noted violinist who has rented my neighbor's house for the summer, and I have been informed that it has been made financially worth his while to play in a nearby famous summer garden, but these material details are lost sight of among the lilacs and hawthorns, and I choose to be only conscious of the glorious fact that a garden becomes a heaven when it is filled with the music of the great composer. And yet one can hardly associate Bach with rural life, and scenes, though it is said that he has written a sonata which concludes with a fugue suggested by the cackle of a barnyard hen. Who knows but what this was the fugue that came to me this morning, and that my neighbor, inspired by the sight of a gardener in soiled cotton morning dress, and shabby tennis shoes, cultivating her madonna lilies that grow in close proximity to the chicken

yard, had been reminded of this fugue and had chosen it for his morning exercise.

But what does it matter? I am not quite sure that music that expresses love of nature and gardens would sound better here than in a concert hall. Of course Mendelsohn's famous Spring Song is spring itself, the very soul of a garden and of the flowers that grow therein, and that part of Goldmark's Country Wedding which is named In the Garden, is flowers turned into notes, but who would care to listen to McDowell's lovely composition entitled To a Wild Rose, while picking wild roses, or to his exquisite To a Water Lily when in the act of plucking one of those flowers? And if that beloved operatic image of my youth, Martha should step from the stage into my garden and choose to sing, among my roses, her famous Last Rose of Summer I am sure that I should feel like driving her from the garden.

Many music lovers confess that they are quite ignorant of the technique of

music, and that what they really do care for is its poetry, its flower-like quality, its power of stimulation, and what Pater calls its perfect identification of form and matter. And belonging to this class it makes no difference to me whether the morning recital among the madonnas was made up of Bach compositions or those of a less reverent spirit. But had Turgenev's Madame Odinstov been present at this morning entertainment in a garden she might have approached very near to the actual happiness for which she yearned. And I know too that this form of a musical has forever spoiled me for the kind that requires for its enjoyment, prosaic dressings up and sallyings forth to a conventional gathering place.

## ROSY REFLECTIONS



WHEN the gathering basket is filled with roses, cut from the rose garden, it seems as if history and literature met in a fragrant and fascinating jumble. There is General Jacqueminot and Meg Merrilies, Paul Neyron, and Dorothy Perkins, Caroline Testout and Charles Lamb, Madame Plantier and John Stuart Mill, Papa Lambert and The Prairie Queen. And as I gather this oddly assorted company into separate bouquet groups I find my spirit is humbled by my unfamiliarity with the historical personages whose names have been given to the roses, and rendered proud by my ability to attach a quotation to every flower.

But who was General Jacqueminot, and what did he do to merit the high honor of having a rose named after him? And who was Paul Neyron, and Mrs. John Laing, and Caroline Testout, and Captain

Christy? I have always loved Madame Plantier as a rose that embodies the pure essence of June, but I haven't an idea who the lady was, or whether she was as lovely as the flower that immortalizes her name.

On the other hand I cannot glance at these bouquets of freshly gathered roses without plunging at once into poetry. I usually begin by bidding the General:

“Goe, happy rose, and enterwove  
With other flowers, bind my love.  
Tell her too she must not be  
Longer flowing, longer free,  
That so oft has fetter'd me.”

And then I remark to Papa Lambert that the roses of Herrick's time brought quite different thoughts to the mind of a poet from those suggested by the modern rose to a modern poet. To a Herrick the flower was but a messenger of love, but to a George Meredith it suggests in the way it unfolds itself in “ugly mold” the manner in which the soul unfolds “through blood and tears.”



And the rose has always been considered as the most consolatory of flowers; according to Keats it was a cure for "the melancholy fit," and Sidney Lanier prayed:

"Would that my songs might be  
What roses make by day and night—  
Distillments of my clod of misery  
Into delight."

It was "roses, roses, with never a spray of yew," that Matthew Arnold would strew upon the dead heroine of his exquisite dirge, *Requiescat*, and *Roses in the Subway*, inspired Dana Burnet to write:

"A wan-cheeked girl with faded eyes—  
Came stumbling down the crowded car  
Clutching her burden to her heart  
As though she held a star—

Roses, I swear it, red and sweet  
And struggling from her pinched white  
hands  
Roses like captured hostages  
From far and fairy lands."



And there are heroines in prose who seem, in the memory of readers, to be always associated with this flower: "Oh, may I get this rose?" questioned Maggie Tulliver of her would-be lover, Stephen Guest, as they stood together in the conservatory, "I think I am quite wicked with roses—I like to gather them and smell them till they have no scent left!" Poor Maggie! There were so few roses in her brief life. Hardy's Eustacia Vye had a face that recalled Bourbon roses, and yellow roses served as a medium of expression for the thwarted passion of the lovers in Mrs. Wharton's latest novel, *The Age of Innocence*.


"He who would have beautiful roses in his garden must have beautiful roses in his heart," writes Dean Hole, in that classic of the rose-bed, *A Book About Roses*. And the author goes on to state. "He must love them well and always. To win he must woo, as Jacob wooed Laban's daughter, though drought and frost consume. He must have not only the glowing admiration, the enthusiasm,

and the passion, but the tenderness, the thoughtfulness, the reverence, the watchfulness of love. And as instance of love's watchfulness, in this matter, he cites the case of some professional rose-growers of whom it was said that they employed hundreds of young men with "gig-umbrellas to stand over the roses when the rain was too heavy." Such an anecdote does not sound absurd to the garden enthusiast who would readily shield a favorite rose with her best umbrella if any good to the flower could be gained thereby.

One might slightly change Dean Hole's lines and say that he who has beautiful roses growing in his garden is bound to have them growing in his heart, for there is something in the mere presence of this Queen of flowers that puts one in harmony with the universe. And it is not mere poetry, when Keats advises the victim of the blues to glut his sorrow on a morning rose, or when Lanier declares these flowers to be "distillments of misery into delight." It is truth won by experience.



## THE PICKED FLOWER

 F WE accept the Wordsworthian faith that every flower enjoys the air it breathes, and add to this the gardener's conviction that flowers are grateful for care, and conscious of cultivation, then as gardeners we owe a certain duty to the picked flower. Or rather does our obligation begin before the picking, and ere we shorten the days of a flower by removing it from its native spot we should ask ourselves whether we are justified in such an act, and whether the friends, or occasions for whom the sacrifice is to be made, are altogether worthy.

Only yesterday I picked a bunch of my fairest mourning brides for a gardenless city friend, and consoled myself for thus shortening their existence, and depriving myself of some lovely companions by thinking of the joy they would bring to my less fortunate friend.

“How lovely,” she said, as she lifted them out of the wet box, where I had so carefully laid them, and then, alas! for my lovely brides, she proceeded to place them on a table at her side while she plunged at once into a conversation regarding her new and taxing duties as an officer in some society for the protection of wild flowers. And coward that I was, I never had the courage to ask: “and will you not care for these cultivated blossoms, and see to it that they are comfortably placed?” And all throughout my visit I could feel the reproachful eyes of those withering brides upon me, and never once did I venture to intercede for their lives, but went away, hoping against hope, that after my departure they might enter the watery haven that they so well deserved.

And I was not altogether sure that even were my mourning brides fortunate enough to reach at last the desired resting place that it would be a place altogether worthy of their charms. I said to myself, in malice no doubt, that any woman who

was capable of keeping flowers out of water was quite equal to permitting them to be choked to death in some tight-necked vase or bowl.

There are women who have a perfect genius for arranging flowers, who can by pure instinct tell the proper receptacle for each blossom, and which of these receptacles will most enhance their beauty. It does not seem too much to say that you can tell a woman's character by the way in which she arranges her flowers, or that it would be well to beware of one who puts them to death in tight-necked vases. I am quite sure that Mary Averill, the author of *Japanese Flower Arrangement*, would bear me out in such statements, for she says that the Japanese schools where the art of flower arrangement is taught are based on the Buddhist desire to preserve life. "From the desire to preserve animal life," says this author, "came the wish to preserve plant life, and it came to be one of the occupations of priests to arrange and care for those plants and flowers which were the most



popular offerings to the gods." For a long time the art had no particular meaning, but gradually there grew up a system and a school each of which had its promoters and followers. The idea of good and evil fortune governs both selection of material and form of arrangement. The color of some flowers are considered by the Japanese as unlucky. Red flowers which are used at funerals are undesirable, not only for that reason, but also because red is supposed to suggest the red flames of a fire of which these people stand in terror. An odd number of flowers is lucky while even numbers are unlucky. For a house-warming white flowers are used, and to celebrate an inheritance all kinds of evergreens or chrysanthemums, or any flower which suggests long life are used. All of Japan's most celebrated generals have been masters of this art of flower arrangement, declares this author, for it was found that such study calmed their minds and made clear their decisions for the field of action.

It is pleasant for an American gardener to know herself to be backed in her theories and ideals by the Japanese generals, and although we will not yield to this nation in our love of flowers, we might learn from it a more scientific and artistic treatment of the picked blossom. To us a flower in a vase is merely a flower in a vase, to the Japanese it is a symbol of life and death. Yet we gardeners who work constantly among the flowers soon come to realize that their mere companionship is a solace, that it calms the mind and makes clear our decisions for the field of action.



## THE CHILD IN THE GARDEN



HIS morning I had a visitor, an uninvited guest who, strange as it may seem, was a welcome one. I don't know his name, I purposely refrained from asking it, and it appeared as if he as purposely refrained from giving it. But I learned these facts about him: that he was four years old last May, that he lived in a city apartment, and that this was his first visit to a garden.

A little white booklet containing Pater's sketch of *The Child in the House* lay on the table in the summer house, and I recalled how this Pater child had wandered one evening through a garden gate which was usually closed, but on this occasion stood open, inviting his presence. "And lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves

thereon—a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood—— Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily-laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams all night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers which seemed to open ruddily in thick fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the bank on either side.——Also then for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free.”

Had my morning visitor sprung up out of the earth he could not have seemed more a part of the garden, so thoroughly in harmony with the place was his bright presence, and so like unto the flowers was his gay little face. After I had finished with the asters I gave myself up to the novel pleasure of introducing my guest to

the flowers, and of noting the impression that these habitants of a garden made upon his horticulturally unsophisticated nature. At first he only stared at them and was silent, but this was partly because of his shyness of me, and when the human ice was melted the floral ice as quickly gave way, and my guest appeared as one brought up among primroses and pinks.

He liked best those flowers whose names conveyed some meaning to his mind: the johnny-jump-ups, bouncing bets, sweet williams, and job's tears, and he laughed aloud at the stories I told about these blossoms. There was the fading remnant of a jack-in-the-pulpit in one of the beds and I assured my visitor that this was the preacher of the woods who was wont to preach only to the trilliums, violets, adder's tongues, and other habitants of wild places, but that in order to keep peace among my johnny-jump-ups, and bouncing bets I had introduced this minister from the wilds into my cultivated garden where he delivered



sermons not only to wayward blossoms, but to those ruthless pickers of wild flowers who seemed bent upon robbing the world of much of its beauty.

Together we watched the bees disappear into the hallways of foxgloves, and waited at the entrances for them to come out. We made poppy-shows that were innocent of any poppies and pressed small wreaths of larkspurs in Pater's Child in the House. We sailed lady's slippers in the bird's bath, set the table for a company of robins and thrushes under a hawthorn tree, and sat breathless while a humming bird secured its luncheon from the blossom of a honeysuckle.

I explained to my visitor that there were certain flowers that marked the time of day, that the morning glory appeared in the early hours, that other flowers unfolded during the middle of the day, and that promptly at four o'clock the flower of that name revealed its homely beauty. Of course my guest announced his intention of remaining until four, but as it was but eleven then,

and charming as he was I would not wish to entertain him for a whole day I was beginning to wonder how I might gracefully dismiss him when a voice from the other side of the lilacs summoned him back to the home of my neighbor.

“Well, next time I’ll come at four,” were his last words, and I knew that even if there never was a next time he would not soon forget this first visit to a garden. And as I again took up my trowel I fell to wondering what the coming child, born and reared in an apartment or hotel, and knowing flowers only from seeing them as part of the domestic decorations, or from observing them in florists’ windows, would be like. He would not be at all like Pater’s child whose house of thought was composed so largely of memories of gardens, of trees, of a window “across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind.” And will he not, I asked myself, be defrauded of his birthright in being

thus deprived of a flowery background to life, and the memory of some opening garden gate?

## A GHOSTLY GARDEN PARTY



**F** COURSE it is quite in the nature of things that having a garden one should give a garden party, a garden party such as one used to read of in English fiction, where heroes and heroines met against a lovely floral background, and fell in love at first sight. Was it not at a garden party that Gwendolen, the heroine of George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, first became conscious of the admiration of Mr. Grandcourt, and where her beauty dazzled all who beheld her? But on second thought I believe it was an archery meeting, though it doesn't matter, at least I know that it was an out-of-door affair, that the English estate where the meeting occurred afforded a beautiful settings for the flower-groups of ladies, "moving and bowing and turning their necks as it would become the leisurely lilies to do if they took to locomotion,"

and lastly that Mr. Grandcourt was bored by the whole affair.

But American garden parties are not like English ones, though they may be said to resemble them in one particular, that of being considered bores by the men. And somehow even my flowers have always seemed to disapprove of these gatherings, and to appear to the least advantage when acting as silent spectators of such functions. Perhaps they were jealous of the "flower-groups" of ladies, or resented the appearance of artificial blossoms on hats and gowns; but at any rate they have invariably presented wan and wilted countenances at these functions, and no doubt this fact was responsible for the presence of ghosts in my garden.

I hit upon the idea of evoking my guests instead of inviting them, evoking them from the pages of the novels I had loved in my youth, and crowding my garden paths and benches with loved but imaginary personages. There are certain advantages about an imaginary



garden party: you don't have to ask your guests whether they will have lemon or cream in their tea, and then too you may invite the men without fear of boring them.

No, it wouldn't do to leave the men out for I could hardly imagine many of my beloved heroines unattended by their adorers. So, walking beside Cecilia, Cecilia of "upright mind," "great purity" and "virtue" was Mortimer Delvile, and accompanying the sprightly and high-spirited Elizabeth Bennet came the dignified and haughty Mr. Darcy. I was almost ashamed to summon Jane Eyre, and her beloved Mr. Rochester, for only recently I had been rereading Professor Saintsbury's *Corrected Impressions*, and had learned that Jane was something of an underbred hussy, and that Mr. Rochester's rudeness and ugliness were made altogether too much of. Of course Maggie Tulliver must be present, but when it came to asking her lover, Stephen Guest, again Professor Saintsbury restrained me, with his assertion that



Stephen was a mere "counter-jumping cad," and wholly unworthy of Maggie. So I asked Philip Waken instead, and determined to consult the Professor no further as to who was who in literature.

It was a rather mixed company of imaginaries that gathered in my garden, for besides those already mentioned were Catherine Lytton, Becky Sharp, The Lady of the Aroostook, Bathesheba Everdene, Gabriel Oak, Lord Ormont and his Aminta, Daisy Miller, and Anna Karenina. And over in one corner of the garden, on my favorite bench by the rose bed, sat three women who came unattended by men, and who were invited solely because of the soulful quality of the beauty bestowed upon them by their creators. First among these ladies was Mona Lisa, seemingly much out of place in an American garden, but invited there on the strength of Pater's memorable word-picture of her beauty. "Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be

troubled by this beauty into which the soul with all its maladies has passed."

Beside Mona Lisa was seated Eleonora Duse, the one guest who lives outside of books, introduced by Arthur Symons, who has this to say of the beauty of the great Italian actress: "She is a woman always, but she is a woman almost in the abstract; the senses are asleep, or awake only to give passion and substance to the disembodied energy of the intellect. When she speaks of beautiful things her face takes light as from an inner source; the dark and pallid cheeks curve into sensitive folds, the small thin-lipped mouth scarcely touched with colour, grows half tender, half ironical, as if smiling at its own abandonment to delight; an exquisite tremor awakens in it, as if it brushed against the petal of a flower, and thrilled at the contact; then the mouth opens, freely, and the strong white teeth glitter in a vehement smile."

The third guest in this group was a modern American girl, Ellen Olenska, who owed her ghostly presence in my garden

to Edith Wharton's unforgettable analysis of her strange charm: "For she had a mysterious faculty of suggesting tragic and moving possibilities outside the daily run of experience. She had hardly ever said a word to him (Newland Archer), to produce this impression, but it was a part of her, either a projection of her mysterious and outlandish background, or something inherently dramatic, passionate and unusual in herself."

These three notable women were my most distinguished guests, but I could not but entertain some misgivings as to how they would get on together, and in fact I was troubled on this score in regard to all of my famous imaginaries. How could I dare to introduce Becky Sharp to Lord Ormont or Anna Karenina to Mr. Darcy? Gabriel Oak could never find anything to say to Aminta, I was sure, nor would he be any better off with Daisy Miller, or the Lady of the Aroostook. Yet I was quite sure that most of these old friends were flower-lovers, and in the presence of these, my assistant horticul-

tural hostesses, they might be trusted to find some common ground for conversation and some justification for my evocations.



## THE PLUSH PANSY



**F** COURSE a garden has its gray days, its seedy days, its down-at-the-heel, gone-to-mold-and-rust days. At such times every flower that you put in your basket has first to be rid of some enemy in the form of bug or caterpillar, and even the thoughts and quotations with which your mind has been freshly filled seem worm-eaten and worthless. As you languidly take up the trowel prepared to loosen the earth about some shriveled asters you ask yourself whether after all a garden is worth while, whether it is a wise investment of one's time to spend a morning digging in earth that is sure to return to a cement-like condition as soon as your trowel has left it, or removing dead blossoms and seeds from plants that are predestined to seediness and death.

Bugs and caterpillars are not suitable society for an active-minded person, you



say to yourself, and the appearance of so many seed pods is depressing to the spirit of one who would forget the dreariness of decline. Lamb was right after all; it is a peopled solitude that one should have, or as Emerson has put it, "Solitude is impracticable and society fatal. We must keep our head in the one and our hands in the other." And the city, you say to yourself, is where one may keep one's hands in society, and it is the proper place in which to spend the declining days of summer. Instead of decline and decay there is rebirth and renewed life. The shop windows are all abloom with seasonable fineries, and the streets are gay with the early appearances of fall fashions. And there are musicals and matinees where one may go and forget the seediness, the bugs and the caterpillars, and all the dreary panorama of this season of mists.

You put down the trowel and consult the time table and within a couple of hours you make one of the vast throng that is crowding the walks and peering

in the shop windows. These windows are indeed fascinating, and that wreath of purple pansies in a milliner's showcase is worth all your rusty asters and drooping cosmos. How well would these plush reminders of spring look upon your fall hat, and inspired by this thought you go in and buy them, and in fancy see your face under its artificial wreath as a type of arrested springtime. Instead of gathering rosebuds while we may, you say to yourself, it is better to gather plush pansies for your hat and all the fripperies and fineries you can afford, and adorn yourself with them, for how long will it be before even a bit of finery will have no longer the power to move you?

But how wearisome it is looking into shop windows and what a sameness to all the gew-gaws that they reveal. Bead-bags, gauzy blouses, startling ball-gowns soon begin to lose their charm and you find yourself wishing that they were subject to the onslaughts of bugs and worms, while the sight of elegant high-heeled shoes causes your mind to revert

to your beloved garden foot-gear. Thank heaven, you say to yourself, that you did not yield to the temptation of buying a matinee ticket. Fancy sitting in a stuffy theatre watching some sordid human drama when you might be an onlooker at nature's fall performances.

You again consult the time table; it is but a little over an hour since you reached the city and yet already you are weary of the peopled solitude, and eager to keep both your head and your hands among the asters and cosmos. Only eleven minutes before the next train leaves; if you take a taxi you may catch it and be rid of all these city horrors. You are in the taxi, and later on the train, before you have really made up your mind about the matter, but how good it seems to be moving marigoldwards. In a little more than an hour the tennis shoes are treading the familiar paths, the plush pansies are placed where they may blush unseen, and you are gazing in admiration at a rose that has unfolded during your absence. And the nice thing about the marigolds

and asters is that they don't ask you why you returned so soon, or why on earth you went at all.



## THE GARDEN AS A SOCIAL CENTRE



SUPPOSE," I remarked to a noted landscape gardener, who in visiting my garden was in reality visiting one of his own children, the offspring of his own poetic horticultural fancy, "that every garden must have its evil genius, and mine has one in the form of a plain black snake, now hiding in the strawberry bed." "He fills my soul with terror," I went on, "and I would be grateful to any bold spirit who would venture to rid me of his presence."

"You should thank God for him," said my visitor, "for he is one of the most valued friends of a garden, ridding it of hundreds of destructive enemies and making it more habitable for the flowers." I never arrived at the point of being grateful for the snake, who was a very well-mannered reptile, always withdraw-



ing into one of the beds as soon as I made my appearance in the path, but this remark of my visitor set me to thinking of the hosts of habitants and visitants of the garden who are forever working for its betterment, but who never receive any credit for what they do. And in time a true gardener grows to love many of these unobtrusive, silent companions, and to find pleasure in observing their ways and habits. Was it not poor Clym Yeobright, the hero of Hardy's *Return of the Native*, who when threatened blindness compelled him to engage in the humble occupation of furze-cutting found delight in the companionship of creeping and winged things:

“Bees hummed around his ears with an intimate air, and tugged at the heath and furze-flowers at his side in such numbers as to weigh them down to the sod. The strange amber-coloured butterflies which Egdon produced, and which were never seen elsewhere, quivered in the breath of his lips, alighted upon his bowed back, and sported with the glitter-

ing point of his hook as he flourished it up and down. Tribes of emerald green grasshoppers leaped over his feet, falling awkwardly on their backs, heads or hips, like unskilful acrobats, as chance might rule; or engaged themselves in noisy flirtations under the fern-fronds with silent ones of homely hue. Huge flies, ignorant of larders and wire-netting, and quite in a savage state, buzzed about him without knowing that he was a man. In and out of the fern brakes snakes glided in their most brilliant blue and yellow guise, it being the season immediately following the shedding of their old skins, when their colors are brightest. Litters of young rabbits came out from their forms to sun themselves upon hillocks, the hot beams blazing through the delicate tissue of each thin-fleshed ear, and firing it to a blood-red transparency in which the veins could be seen."

Impertinent, destructive creatures, these last-named habitues of a garden, and one of the problems that confronts every gardener is the getting rid of such

troublesome neighbors. But I was willing, on this warm summer morning, to forget these enemies and even to put a s i d e Mrs. Asquith's Autobiography which for several days had shared with *The Return of the Native*, the honor of being my only literary companions in the garden, in order to watch some bees which had taken up their residence in an old tree trunk. Yet before I laid down the story of this fascinating woman I had gathered some grist for my literary garden-mill from some lines written to her by her friend, Lord Pembroke:

"Keep the outer borders of your heart's sweet garden, free from garish flowers and wild and careless weeds, so that when your fairy god-mother turns the Prince's footsteps your way he may not, distrusting your nature or his own powers, and only half-guessing at the treasures within, tear himself reluctantly away, and pass sadly on, without your ever knowing that he had been near." Rather an irrevelant quotation is this, having no bearing on the garden as a social

centre, but it is one more proof of the great debt that the pen owes to the garden. And as I said the bees drew me away from the brilliant Englishwoman, and caused me to take a seat by the side of an old tree trunk in which they had taken up their residence, in order that I might better study their actions. I could think of nothing but the lobby of a fashionable hotel as I noted their hurried comings and goings, only the bees appeared to have the advantage of the hotel guests inasmuch as they were unincumbered with luggage, and not so perseveringly bent on pleasure-seeking. And quite close to this home of the bees was a large ant-hill and when I grew weary of watching the bees I transferred my attention to the energetic ants. A number of airships passed over my head as I sat there, and I wondered whether their occupants did not look down curiously upon us gardeners in much the same way as we gaze upon the bees and ants. So much depends upon the point of view, and the views of aviators must be so very exalted!

It would be interesting to keep a kind of garden register, in which could be inscribed the names of all these winged and creeping creatures, famous or humble, useful or harmful that find their way to a garden, and take upon themselves the duty of either helping to preserve or to destroy its beauty. A look at such a volume would convince the gardener of one thing at least, that there is no such thing as complete solitude in a garden.



## COSMOS, CATS AND COYOTES



THE act of propping up the cosmos this morning drew my thoughts to big things, and I turned my back on *The Idiot*, and *The Princess Cassimassima*, as mere fiction-folks who were not calculated to afford me the inspiration that I needed, and that would be in keeping with the cosmos. In reality, however, I should have been particularly kind to *The Idiot* and the *Princess* for I had left them out all night in my garden, and a shower had not added to their external appearance. Some one ought to get out garden editions of popular works, editions that would stand exposure to the weather, and could lie about in gardens, awaiting the pleasure of the gardener.

But it was yesterday that I had summoned these two old acquaintances for brief moments of communion, and this morning it was not fiction but philosophy



that my soul desired. So I determined to put into the gathering basket three favorite philosophers, Montaigne, Schopenhauer, and William James, or as much of the philosophy of the latter as could be extracted from his letters, now being published in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

But when I went in search of the gathering basket I discovered that three kittens had taken possession of that receptacle, and were lying asleep, beside the trowel and scissors. I was obliged to eject them in order to make room for my philosophers, but I am not altogether sure that I did not turn out the greater philosophers, in order to make room for the less, so thoroughly in possession of the secret of happiness does a kitten seem to be. "Wonderful, wonderful, is our life and that of our companions," wrote Thoreau. "That there should be such a thing as a brute animal, not human! that it should attain to a sort of society with our race! Think of cats, for instance; they are neither Chinese or Tartars, they neither go to school or read

the Testament. Yet how near they come to doing so, how much they are like us who do so."

At the roots of some lovely pink cosmos I planted such thoughts from Montaigne as these: "True solitude is not to be found by mere withdrawal from a crowd; all the evils of a crowd—ambition, avarice, irresolution, fear, inordinate desires may pursue us even into solitude. Our disease lies in the mind and the true solitude which can be enjoyed in cities and courts though not so commodiously as apart is attained only when the soul enters into real possession of itself. A wife, children, worldly goods, and more than all else, health are precious gains of existence, but our happiness must not depend on these, we must reserve a back-shop wholly our own, wholly free, wherein to maintain our true liberty and possess our impregnable retreat. Greatness of soul consists not so much in mounting and pressing forward as in knowing how to range and circumscribe one's self." Quite in line with these

thoughts are Schopenhauer's assertions that the happiest man is one who has enough in his own inner wealth, that what one human being can be to another is not a very great deal, that the happiest destiny on earth is to have the rare gift of rich individuality.

There was room for no more of Montaigne and Schopenhauer in my bed of cosmos, and I opened at random the last installment of William James' letters, and came upon this one, written while on a vacation in the mountains, to his seven-year-old son at home.


"I saw a moving sight the other morning before breakfast, in a little hotel where I slept in the dusty fields. The young man of the house had shot a little wolf called a coyote in the early morning. The heroic little animal lay on the ground with his big furry ears, and his clean white teeth, and his jolly cheerful little body, but his brave little life was gone. It made me think how brave all these living things are. Here little coyote was, without clothes or house, or books, or

anything, with nothing but his own naked self to pay his way with, and risking his life so cheerfully and losing it—just to see if he could pick up a meal near the hotel. He was doing his coyote business like a man hero, and you must do your boy-business, and I my man-business like a hero, or else we wont be worth as much as that little coyote.”

When I had supplied props for the cosmos, and had pondered over all these philosophic props for my soul, I picked some of the handsomest of the blossoms for the gathering basket, and placed them beside the Princess, The Idiot, and the philosophers. An oddly assorted company they seemed, and yet they had one thing in common, they taught the same lesson, the lesson that Professor James learned from the coyote, that whatever we have to do in life, whether it be cultivating the roots of plants or working for daily bread it behooves us to do our work like heroes, “or else we wont be worth as much as that little coyote.”



## A SHREDDED DAY

T WAS late when I entered the garden this morning, and I remarked to the early-morn petunias with whom I had a weeding engagement, that really the egotism and inconsiderateness of some women was past comprehension, and I was glad that it was my destiny to live among plants rather than among people. The occasion of these unoriginal observations was a morning call of which I was the victim, the caller being a former resident of our suburb who had returned a few weeks ago to her city apartment which had been rented furnished for the summer. The condition in which Mrs. Gray had found her apartment, and the damage for which her tenant was responsible made up the subject of her morning discourse, and was repeated I fancy in many a suburban home during the course of this day. It seems that her rolling pin had rolled



away into oblivion, that her lemon squeezer was nicked beyond further use, "and my dear I just wish that you could have seen my double boiler!"

But I had no wish to see her double boiler, and a very ardent desire to be among my double dahlias, and it was hard to forgive a morning visitor who could not realize her own unwelcomeness and the preciousness of her hostess' time. When I returned to the petunias after my guest had carried her rolling pin and double boiler to another house I took up a small volume of Emerson which is usually to be found on the table in my summer house, or under it in a rain-proof shelter, and read for a few minutes in order to quiet a disturbed mind. "Society is frivolous," says Emerson, "and shreds its days into patches." Yes, this is true, and the longer I live the more am I impressed by the value and dignity of solitude, and the more am I shocked by the daring of those who would venture to violate this solitude. What right have we to presume that people are willing to give

up to us a tithe of anything so precious as time? And who are we that we should venture to think that we have attractions that would justify the sacrifice of duties on the part of an unwilling hostess?

Of course there are visitors whom we would welcome at any time, who reveal a beneficent power that calms the troubled waters, and smooths out the wrinkles from life. But how many people like this do we know? and besides a gardener has no troubled waters or wrinkled life.

But my petunias, gay and cheerful companions though they always are, did not look quite so gay or so cheerful as they would had not this morning visitor taken the bloom from my thoughts, and even Emerson failed to restore this bloom. I found that my mind would wander away from the petunias to the subject of friendship, and I insisted upon putting that old banal question to myself as to whether there was such a thing, and whether in fact we had any need of friends in these days. Did not the telephone now take the place of those inti-

mate personal notes we used to exchange with so-called friends, and did not motors and movies afford the distraction that we were wont to demand of friendship?

Literature, of course, offers many inspiring instances of devoted friendship: there is that of Amis and Amile in one of the early French stories which Pater recalls in the opening essay of the collection entitled *The Renaissance*. "Amis and Amile, then, are true to their comradeship through all trials; and in the end it comes to pass that at the moment of great need Amis takes the place of Amile in a tournament for life or death. After this it happened that a leprosy fell upon Amis so that his wife would not approach him, and wrought to strangle him; and he departed from his home, and at last prayed his servants to carry him to the house of Amile." Amile was equal to this test, and to the still greater one demanded by the angel Raphael that he slay his two children in their sleep and wash his comrade in their blood, that he might be made whole.

No, we don't hear of such acts of friendship these days, though perhaps the true story of the great war may relate instances of comradeship and self sacrifice quite as edifying. Then of course there was the friendship between the Merchant of Venice and his friend Antonio that is lovely to contemplate, and there is Diana of the Crossways' devotion to her invalid friend, Emma, Lady Dunstane. When Percy Dacier met Diana, by chance, early one morning on a mountain walk, that lady carried a bunch of pale purple meadow-crocus in her hand and in response to his exclamation of pleasure at the sight of them she said: "These are plucked to be sent to a friend; otherwise I'm reluctant to take the life of flowers for a whim. Wild flowers, I mean. I am not sentimental about garden flowers: they are cultivated for decoration, grown for clipping." To a gardener, of course, this is the supreme test of friendship: to be willing to take the life of a flower for a friend.

Yes, there are endless examples of fine friendships in literature, but in one's own humdrum life where do we find them;

they are dreams and fables as Emerson says. And how very botanical Emerson becomes when writing of friendship: "I have often had fine fancies about persons, which have given me delicious hours," he writes, "but the joy ends in the day; it yields no fruit." And again, in warning us not to shun any of the realities of the plant of friendship: "The root of the plant is not unsightly to science, though for chaplets and festoons we cut the stem short." And again: "Almost all people descend to meet. All association must be a compromise, and, what is worst, the very flower and aroma of the flower of each of the beautiful natures disappears as they approach each other."

I was so grateful to Emerson for these unconscious tributes to the garden, and for his dependence upon flowers and fruits for literary symbols that I turned to the rosy morns with restored good humor, and although my mind as well as my morning had been unpleasantly shredded, the afternoon was still before me.



## ARCHITECTURAL BLOSSOMS



MOST of the arts may be enjoyed in a garden; literature may be brought there, along with the garden tools, painting one can very well do without, for has not every gardener a private gallery of her own? and music may be enticed there, or will come stealing across the lilac hedge uninvited. But architecture you must go forth to seek, and if you be one who regards the arts as one distinguished family made up of wholly different, but equally beautiful individuals then you must feel that you cannot afford to forego intercourse with a single fascinating member of this remarkable group. For as Pater has said: "the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind." A greedy gardener who is a lover of the arts, and no true flower-



lover can be indifferent to them, longs sometimes for the peculiar kind of impressions that only architecture can give, and she is ready then to neglect her cosmos and to go forth to seek a Gothic cathedral.

Of course it is almost like planting a Gothic cathedral in one's garden to read again that inspiring essay of Ruskin's: *The Nature of the Gothic*, that mine of philosophy as well as of architecture which is said to have set fire to the enthusiasm of William Morris, and to have kindled the beliefs of his whole life. "To my mind," says Morris, "this chapter is one of the most important things written by the author, and in future days will be considered as one of the very few necessary utterances of the century."

Time has born out this statement of the poet-socialist, and to read to-day of the nature of the Gothic, is to read at the same time some noble truths about the nature of man.

For man, like Gothic Architecture, is essentially imperfect, says Ruskin. "In

all things that live there are certain irregularities and deficiencies which are not only signs of life, but sources of beauty. No human face is exactly the same in its lines on each side, no leaf perfect in its lobes, no branch in its symmetry. All admit irregularity as they imply change; and to banish imperfection is to destroy expression, to check exertion, to paralyze vitality. All things are literally better, lovelier and more beloved for the imperfections which have been divinely appointed, that the law of human life may be Effort, and the law of human judgment Mercy."

These are comforting thoughts for the gardener's mental gathering basket, and here is another intellectual blossom: "Now it is only by labour that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labour can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity." Here Ruskin has expressed the secret of the happiness of a book-loving gardener, who has learned by experience that it is her labour that has made the thoughts


that come to her through books healthy, and that this labour could not bring the joy that it does were it not for such book-inspired thoughts. And she feels that for the restlessness that sometimes besets her, even while digging, there is a justification, for is not inquietude the key to the Gothic spirit, and does she not therefore toil with the restlessness of a Goth? "That restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in its triglyph furrow, and be at peace, but the work of the Gothic spirit is fret-work still, and it can neither rest in, nor from its labour, but must pass on sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified forever in the change that must come alike on them that wake and them that sleep."

It is almost like wandering in a garden to allow one's mind to "flicker feverishly"

through this remarkable essay, for the reader is made to realize how much architecture owes to nature, to flowers and trees, for its inspiration: for example, there are the rose windows, the Venetian flower-orders, the lily columns of St. Marks, the flowering plants carved in the Veronese niches. Yes, Architecture had to go to the garden for much of its material, and Ruskin is the one to analyze its methods of using this material. And for a type of the life of this world the great author turns to our beloved fox-glove blossom: "a third part bud, a third part past, a third part in full bloom." I had always resented the third part that is past, both in the fox-glove and in other flowers of a similar nature, but after reading Ruskin's essay I learned to accept such blossoms and to respect them as symbols of our imperfect life.



## SOULS, SEEDS AND FORSYTHIAS

T SEEMS as if there is not enough cheerful literature in the whole world to fortify the urban spirit of a country gardener against the depression produced by these days of decline and decay. And although I filled the gathering basket, on this dreary November morning, with all the pleasant things about autumn that I knew, I could not but feel that odes to melancholy and dejection would be more in keeping with my mood, and with the appearance of the garden.

Of course I know that she is no true gardener who permits her spirit to droop at the sight of the first frosted four o'clock, or whose heart sinks at beholding the blackened foliage of her marigold plants, but on the other hand she is an unnatural mother to these foster children whom she has watched and cared for throughout the summer if she does not



mourn over their decay. It is in vain that I assure myself that the perennials go to sleep only for the winter, that many of the annuals are self-seeders, and have some unanticipated blossoms up their sleeves with which to surprise their caretaker during the coming summer. For I know only too well that perennials frequently belie their names and are annual in their characters while the self-seeders are often self-deceivers as well. To be sure there is a certain satisfaction in putting the perennials to bed for the winter, in tucking the blankets of leaves about the cherished roses, and in putting out the lights on the pinks, but these are melancholy satisfactions at best, and not calculated to raise the gardener's spirit.

So while I paused before some withered hollyhocks, and gathered the last of their seeds, I repeated to myself Emily Dickenson's gay verses on Autumn:

“The morns are meeker than they were,  
The nuts are getting brown;  
The berry's cheek is plumper,

The rose is out of town.  
The maple wears a gayer scarf  
The field a scarlet gown.  
Lest I should be old-fashioned,  
I'll put a trinket on."

But I did not feel in the least like putting a trinket on, and besides, these lines were written about an autumn that the frost had not yet touched to decay. And the same might be said of the lines in which Henry James gives his impression of a New England autumn which was a part of the American Scene revisited after many years of absence. Autumn was likened by the great novelist to a kind of imprisoned painter, "a Bohemian in rusty jacket who had broken out with palette and brush." "Yet the way the color begins to be dabbed," wrote James, "the way here and there for a start, a solitary maple on a woodside flames in single scarlet recalls nothing so much as the daughter of a noble house dressed for a fancy ball, with the whole family gathered round to admire her before she goes."

But nature, this morning, presents an after-the-ball appearance, and the daughter of the noble house, as well as her whole family, look dingy and faded.

So even Henry James failed to console me for the loss of my beloved flowers, among whose faded remnants I now sadly wandered. A few ugly yellow stalks are all that is left of some gay sweet-williams, the dried and withered skeletons next to them were once the brightest of blue bachelor buttons, and those prostrate brown stems in the bed beyond, early in the season, answered to the name, if not the nature, of bouncing bets. All things of the past now, mere misty objects of memory. And it is the same with the literary flowers that have graced my garden during the summer. Evelina and Emma, Catherine Lytton, Henry Esmond, Diana of the Crossways, The Idiot, The Princess Cassimassama, all gone, while their creators, along with my beloved poets and essayists, live only in the memories of their readers.

Then I took from the gathering basket  
 a volume of Keats, and turned to that  
 verse in the 'Ode to Autumn,' of which  
 Sidney Colvin said that "it expresses so  
 transparently and so directly the pen-  
 siveness of the season that we almost  
 forget that they are words at all and  
 nature herself and the season seem speak-  
 ing to us."

"Where are the songs of Spring? Ay  
 where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy  
 music too,

While barred clouds bloom the soft  
 dying day,

And touch the stubble fields with rosy  
 hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats  
 mourn

Among the river shallows, borne aloft

Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from  
 hilly bourn;

Hedge-crickets sing; and now with  
 treble soft

The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies."

Yes, Keats is one of the perennials, and as I proceeded to uproot some shriveled asters, and to gather seeds from their dried stems I recalled other literary perennials that had been my close companions during the summer and I quoted to myself the comforting things they had said concerning dissolution. There was Montaigne whose essay entitled *That to Philosophize is to Learn to Die*, contains such unforgettable seeds of thought as these: "Your death is a part of the order of the universe, 'tis a part of the life of the world. The utility of living consists not in the length of days but in the use of time. There is nothing evil in life for him who rightly comprehends that the privation of life is no evil."

These, I said to myself, are seeds worth preserving, and so are some of Pater's philosophical reasonings: "Not to dis-



criminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening." And again Emerson's analysis of the method of Nature brings some autumn consolation: "We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame, or whether they have before had a natural history like that of this body you see before you; but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in any grave; but that they circulate through the Universe; before the world was they were."

Yes, these are great thoughts, and applicable to plants as well as to persons though perhaps it may be stated with greater certainty in the case of the plant, for do I not hold in my hands the seeds



whose qualities will reassemble in similar frames? Yet nevertheless, if autumn has its music and its musings they are tinged with sadness, and a gardener is peculiarly sensitive to this autumn melancholy.

And then as I wandered towards the end of the garden I came upon one of nature's phenomenons: a forsythia in flower. Now every one who is familiar with this bush knows that it is almost the first of our cultivated, flowering shrubs, to announce the arrival of spring and that its blossoms, golden bells they are sometimes called, appear before the leaves. But here was a bush, whose leaves had turned to a beautiful autumnish old rose, putting forth delicate yellow blossoms that were smaller, but far more lovely than those of Spring. I could but recall the words of Santayanna, quoted in a previous essay: "Even under the inevitable crust of age the soul remains young, and wherever it is able to break through sprouts into something green and tender." The forsythia seemed to be the very floral embodiment of this senti-

ment, the symbol of the soul's power to defy age and the season, and break into the greenness and tenderness of spring on a day in late autumn.

And I was half angry with myself that on my way back to the house with the gathering basket, in which, beside a sprig of the forsythia, lay Montaigne and Pater Keats and Emerson, on my arm, I should find myself quoting Kipling (who had never been among my close garden intimates), and repeating to myself another of his verses on the garden:

“Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who  
made him sees  
That half a proper gardener's work is  
done upon his knees,  
So when your work is finished, you can  
wash your hands and pray  
For the Glory of the Garden that it may  
not pass away!  
And the glory of the garden it shall never  
pass away!”











**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**



00009134347

